



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary

Public Policy Committee **Minutes**

May 16, 2024
9:00am – 10:00am
Zoom
Meeting ID: 859 4707 5457

Members Present: Chair, Diana Merzweiler, Jeff White, and Katie Wolf Whaley

Members Absent: Gretta Hylton, Andrew Johnson, Amy Luttrell, Cora McNabb, and Leslie Hoffman

Staff Present: Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR) Administrator, Nanci Howard, KYOVR Administrative Specialist, Division Director - Department of Workforce Development, Holly Hendricks

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review:

Chair, Diana Merzweiler, welcome everyone to the meeting.

Project NEON Update:

KYOVR Administrator, Nanci Howard, provided a brief update on the work of Project NEON. She stated she is not involved with the Supported Employment/Customized Employment work regarding Project NEON but that she continually meets with Lead Subject Matter (SME) Expert, Karen Lee bi-weekly with Council Chair, Katie Wolf Whaley and KYOVR Executive Director, Cora McNabb, to touch base on important issues surrounding the work of the project. Council Chair and committee member, Katie Wolf Whaley, expanded on the work that Project NEON is doing with Supported Employment/Customized Employment. She announced that SME, Trisha Jones-Parkins, will potentially be provided a webinar series for providers later in 2024 and will be speaking at the Kentucky APSE in the fall as a keynote/session presenter. Discussion was had regarding customized employment training. Diana proposed the question if a milestone could be written into the provider contract to require attending the updated customized employment training. Katie stated it was a good question and that it has been mentioned before. Committee member, Jeff White, stated the current training is in depth and 'phenomenal' but that some individuals may need more, intensive training. He sees there may be some underutilization of the training from provider leadership. Katie Wolf Whaley stated she will be receiving additional staff on the Supported Employment Training Project and the hope is, in July, someone will be available to conduct administrative training for provider leadership.

CIE Definition Update:

Diana Merzweiler announced the legislative recommendation to align the state definition with the

federal definition was selected by the committee and approved at the April 14th council meeting. Steps were discussed on how to proceed with the recommendation. Guidance on how to proceed from KYOVR has not been received. Diana asked Katie and Nanci to check in with KYOVR Executive Director, Cora McNabb, and the Education and Labor Cabinet regarding how to proceed with getting the definition recommendation in the hands of legislators. Nanci Howard agreed to set up a meeting. Discussion was held regarding sending a letter. It was determined not to send a letter from the Council to legislators. KYOVR Director of Field Services, Holly Hendricks, typed in the chat that she suggested draft from the committee to Cora to view. Katie will write a draft and send to Diana after meeting with the Council of State Governments representative, Andrew Johnson, to receive his input.

State and Federal Regulation Discussion:

Diana Merzweiler began to discuss comparisons federal Medicaid law Kentucky Waiver policies and regulations. Council Chair and Committee member, Katie Wolf Whaley, provided clarification regarding what Karen Lee discussed during the meeting with herself and Diana. Committee meeting member, Jeff White, explained that before a waiver can come into existence, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on a federal level, have to review and approve it. It was decided to table this discussion until Karen Lee can attend the next committee meeting to provide more clarification on how the committee should proceed.

Waiver Regulation Discussion:

Chair, Diana Merzweiler began the Waiver regulation discussion. She stated Jeff White provided waiver policy reviews to the committee in the past. Discussion was held on how policies should be reviewed and recommendations from the committee pulled and presented to the full council. It was suggested the committee make recommendations to the full council for approval and add those to the annual report. Katie Wolf Whaley mentioned this was different than last report due to time restraints. Diana stated prior to the next meeting the committee could review the waiver policies presented by Jeff White and choose recommendations for the Council to include in the annual report. Jeff White stated he is currently reviewing and completing short term issues. Nanci Howard expressed review of the meeting with Karen Lee, Katie Wolf Whaley and Diana. She stated discussion was held during that meeting suggesting the committee make a set priority list of all policies and a list of who is responsible for which policy review. Diana stated she could reach out to each individual who conducted the review and ask them to rank which items might be higher on the list of recommendations than others. Jeff White made the suggestion to formally ask those responsible for those policies to please consider making revisions.

Next Meeting Dates:

Public Policy Committee:

Thursday, June 13, 2024

9:00am-10:00am EST

[Zoom Link](#)

Employment First Council:

Friday, April 12th, 2024

1:00pm – 3:00pm EST

[Zoom Link](#)

Hybrid Format

Location: Transportation Cabinet

200 Mero Street
Conference Room C107
Frankfort, KY 40622

500 Mero Street • 4th Floor NE • Frankfort, KY • 40601

Toll Free: (800) 372 - 7172 • Direct: (502) 782-3421 • Email: Nanci.Howard@ky.gov